

Sermon Transcript

08.23.2026

Hebrews 12:4-11

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- Good morning. Open your Bibles to Hebrews 12 vs. 4.
- Today we want to talk about everyone's favorite fun topic, discipline.
- So as we begin, let's take a survey to get a feel for how well we have or haven't been disciplined.
- Let's begin with spiritual disciplines. How many of you would consider yourself a fairly disciplined person?
- How many of you would say that you exercise self-control in your eating? | In your speech?
- How many of you are disciplined in regards to exercise? | What about sleep?
- How many of you have a consistent regular rhythm for reading and studying the word?
- What about for prayer?
- These are all formative disciplines, in general, ways that you discipline yourself for the sake of spiritual and/or physical health.
- Now let's look at more corrective disciplines.
- Raise your hand if you've ever had your mouth washed out with soap. | What about time out?
- How many of you were ever grounded longer than a day?
- How many of you were consistently spanked by your parents?
- How many of felt the sting of a leather belt? What about a wooden spoon? A switch from a tree? My dad's generation was like Jason Bourne searching the room for any sort of instrument to inflict some temporary pain.
- How many of you were ever spanked by someone other than your own parent? A teacher or principal or grandparent or neighbor or something.
- Well, I myself got a lot of spankings and my own kids have seen their fair share.
- But a lot has changed in the past generation or two. I did some research and found that in 1968, less than 60 years ago, 94% of American parents approved of spanking.
- Today, that number is just north of 40%.
- What caused the change? Was it a sudden discovery of some hidden exegetical insight into Scripture? Some doctoral dissertation on the use of the rod in Proverbs?
- Of course not. Rather, it was years of secular cultural pressures. Decades of absorbing pop psychology, self-help therapy, feminism, liberalism and a caricatured picture of the child as the center of the home has produced a severe distaste for discipline even within the church.
- My point isn't to go on a diatribe about spanking. And certainly isn't to do one of those 'in my day' old guy rants.
- But I bring this up because today's text doesn't make sense in today's culture. What I mean by that is that the author is going to assume a number of things that have historically been granted and are objectively true and yet which we have unfortunately neglected or even denied.
- For instance, if you think that discipline is cruel, that all corporeal punishment is abusive, that we should just talk to and reason with our kids. If you think that happiness trumps holiness, then your ability to hear and understand and heed this text will be severely limited.
- This isn't because the text is about spanking your kid. Rather, the author will use the image of parental discipline as an analogy for the paternal discipline of our heavenly Father which means

that if we have a distorted image of parental discipline that is going to bleed over and corrupt how we understand God's discipline of us.

- But if you can see beyond the Overton window of parenting and believe that God's word and way is better, we have a chance to be changed by the word this morning. And that's my hope so let's pray to that end.
- Self, others, me
- Hebrews is a bit like a game of would you rather. Except the choices are absurd. Would you rather have a nicer house or be homeless? Would you rather get a promotion or get fired? That's kinda what the underlying choice of Hebrews is like.
- On one hand we can have perfection, righteousness, peace, and joy. We have that by enduring, by holding fast, by believing in the sufficiency, supremacy and superiority of the Son of God.
- Or, on the other hand, we can drift, shrink back to destruction.
- So would you rather have life or death, joy or sorrow, preservation or destruction?
- That's the choice that plagues the early readers and confronts us today as well. And yet, just when we're tempted to chuckle at the simplicity of the choice, we're reminded of how often we choose poorly.
- How often we choose the fleeting pleasures of sin over the eternal joy of righteousness. How often we trade a forest of felicity for a forbidden fruit. A birthright for a bowl of soup. A fountain of living water for broken cisterns.
- That's the context for Hebrews which is one extended exhortation to see and savor the superiority of Jesus Christ.
- Better than Moses, better than Joshua, a better priest who offered a better sacrifice in a better sanctuary on the basis of better promises of a better covenant securing better rewards.
- In any and all ways, Christ is better.
- We see that most clearly in the crescendo of the book in chapters 7-10 where the author systematically makes the case for Christ's substantial superiority to the shadows of the old covenant.
- And then in chapter 11 we saw a litany of saints who comprise the hall of faith, examples of what faith looks like in action, men and women who trusted God often in spite of all outward appearances.
- Then last week we began chapter 12 which represents a literary and emotional shift in the book in that we begin to move toward gospel imperatives.
- As you may recall, the first 11 chapters were mostly filled with indicatives. Statements of fact. What God has done. Those are called indicatives. Statements of what is true, what has been accomplished.
- Then in chapter 12, we begin to see more of a focus on the imperatives, those are commands or applications of the indicatives. In light of what God has done, this is how we should therefore live and walk.
- Or you might think of it as gospel and law. Gospel is what God has done. Law is what we do in response to what God has done. All gospel and no law leads to antinomianism or licentiousness and all law without gospel leads to legalism or moralism. Neither is right. We need a clear understanding of how the indicatives fuel the imperative.
- So, in light of all that has preceded in chapters 1-11, therefore we should lay aside every weight and sin and look to and consider Jesus as we saw last time.

- To make that point, we saw a theme of athletic imagery, a runner throwing off his garment in order to be unencumbered, to run the race with endurance. Well, that same image will run through our passage today as well so let's begin in vs. 4.

In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.
(Hebrews 12:4)

- Back in chapter 10 we got some insight into the context and thus the concern of the book.
- We see this in vss. 32-34
 - *But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.* (Hebrews 10:32-34)
- So there was suffering at the hands of others, whether fellow Jews or Roman authorities.
- That was a real and present danger. But the ultimate struggle isn't with an outer enemy, but rather the struggle within.
- Notice that he writes of this struggle against sin.
- This fits with what we saw last week regarding the command to lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely or easily entangles.
- The greatest threat that we face isn't some other person, our spouse, a parent, a child, our boss, the Democrats or Muslims or Jews or whatever. And neither is it some external circumstance, the economy, politics, Covid, cancer or even death.
- The greatest enemy is sin.
- And so the author portrays us being in a great battle with sin.
- As we quoted from John Owen last week, "be killing sin or sin will be killing you."
- Every single one of us is engaged in a cosmic conflict with sin and if you don't see and feel that struggle, that's merely evidence that you are already captured.
- Now, the sin in view here in Hebrews isn't just any old generic sin, its the particular sin of apostasy. That's the overarching concern of the book, don't fall away, don't give in, don't shrink back. And yet, as we've mentioned a number of times, we can't separate that particular sin from a general pattern of other lesser sins.
- After all, apostasy isn't spontaneous. Its cultivated in the context a prolonged pattern of compromise. No one individual sin will disqualify you, but any one sin could be the beginning of a season that culminates in destruction if left unchecked, unconfessed, unmortified.
- Think of it like gaining weight. No one meal is going to have that much of an effect on your weight and yet the scale moves as days and weeks and months of poor choices add up.
- The same is true of sin. Very few people just suddenly commit adultery. First, they lust and they don't confess it. Then they begin an emotional affair and they don't confess it. Then eventually it transitions into something more physical.
- So the particular danger that Hebrews is warning against is apostasy, but apostasy is cultivated in dozens or hundreds of smaller concessions.
- So we must struggle against sin. Lay it aside as we read last week. Or kill it as Romans says.
- And the word he uses, that we translate as struggle is antagonizomai in Greek. You might remember we talked about this word last week a bit. Its where we get the word agony, but antagonizomai connotes the image of a boxing or wrestling match.
- So now we've shifted the analogy from a footrace to something a bit more martial & violent.

- And though the battle rages, it has not yet cost the Hebrews any blood.
- By that he most likely means that though they have faced suffering, they've been marginalized, imprisoned, and taken advantage of, they have not yet faced the ultimate test of martyrdom.
- Which means complaining is weak sauce.
- Imagine a boxer quitting a fight before he's even started bleeding. Imagine a marine giving up because of a bruise.
- Likewise, imagine forsaking Christ because of a little prison or mocking.
- The rhetorical effect of such an imagery is even more striking when juxtaposed with the picture of Christ we saw last week. Remember how he not only despised the shame, but endured the cross. In other words He bled.
- So He suffered death for you and you're complaining when you aren't even bleeding? As Chrysostom writes:
 - "You have not yet submitted to death; your loss has extended to money, to reputation, to being driven from place to place. Christ however shed His blood for you, while you have not [done it] for yourselves. He contended for the Truth even unto death, fighting for you; while you have not yet entered upon dangers that threaten death." (Chrysostom)
- As we read last week in vs. 3
 - *Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.* (Hebrews 12:3)
- In other words, by considering his suffering, we are strengthened in our own.
- If He died for us, can we not suffer for Him?
- Let's keep going. Vss. 5-6.

***And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."* (Hebrews 12:5-6)**

- Now the image moves from disciplining yourself to being disciplined by God.
- And to make the point the author quotes Proverbs 3:11-12 which shows that discipline is the act of a loving father.
- Now, to understand this, we need to repent of our postmodern conceptions of love. Our contemporary therapeutic culture has adopted the idea that love means doing what makes someone else feel good whereas the biblical definition is actually doing what makes someone else be good.
- In other words, discipline is good. Discipline is kind. Discipline is loving.
- If you don't see and believe and feel that, then this passage is really going to be foreign to you. If discipline has negative connotations for you, if you think of discipline as mean and harsh and antiquated, then you need to repent of such secular worldly thinking and be renewed in your mind or you'll never embrace the Lord's discipline.
- Because the truth is that He disciplines those he loves.
- And he chastises every son whom he receives.
- The word chastises literally means to flog, whip, or scourge. To use our modern colloquialism, He spansks every son whom he receives. In other words, He inflicts pain for our good.
- As 1 Peter 4:19 says:
 - *Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.* (1 Peter 4:19)

- Look at the phrase suffer according to God's will. If your theology doesn't have room for God willing your suffering, then its time to get a new theology.
- And the goal isn't just to believe it, but to be refreshed and fortified by it.
- Notice that the author calls this an exhortation. That can also be translated as encouragement.
- So be encouraged by the reality that God is disciplining you.
- How? Again, by means of pain. The same way that an athlete inflicts pain on himself to get better or a coach inflicts pain on a player to make him better or a father inflicts a small amount of pain on a child to make him or her better, so the Lord does with us.
- But this assumes that we have a healthy understanding of the fatherhood of God. So many of us read our own experiences of our fathers onto our heavenly fathers. They were distant or cruel and so we perceive God in similar terms.
- I remember very clearly the winter of 2009 when I was confronted by the fact that I didn't really relate to God as my heavenly father. He was Lord, king, sovereign, God, but not father. I resonated with His sovereignty, but not his love.
- I understand His transcendence, but not His immanence.
- I remember reading this quote from J.I. Packer and being blown away:
 - "You sum up the whole of New Testament religion if you describe it as the knowledge of God as one's holy Father. If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. For everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament new, and better than the Old, everything that is distinctively Christian as opposed to merely Jewish, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. 'Father' is the Christian name for God. Our understanding of Christianity cannot be better than our grasp of adoption." (J.I. Packer)
- I realized that wasn't how I related to God and so I sought to get help by embarking on an exploration of the fatherhood of God for the next year and what I found was fascinating as so many areas of my life were amended even though I wasn't actively working on them. The power of anxiety and lust and fear were all greatly reduced as I began to walk in ever greater freedom.
- And some 6 years later, I had my first child and the imagery made even more sense as I realized just how deeply I loved this little girl. And because I loved her, I took responsibility to discipline her. Why? To save her from more serious pain down the line.
- In other words, this passage took on a new meaning. Before it was black and white, now in color. Before I read it in two dimensions, but now in 3D.
- I understood the analogy so much deeper because I had a greater grasp of what it means to love a child and what it meant to be loved by a father.
- And that's the image that the author is using of our own suffering. It isn't purposeless. It isn't useless or capricious or arbitrary.
- This is the problem with the atheist's objection to the problem of evil. If God is all good and all powerful, why is there evil in the world? Why is there suffering? We call this theodicy, not the odyssey like the Christopher Nolan movie, but theodicy, one word, formed from two Greek words, meaning the justice of God.
- Theodicy is an attempt to defend God's justice in light of the existence of evil & injustice.
- And the problem is that there is a hidden assumption in the skeptic's objection. That hidden presupposition is that suffering and evil can't be used for good. But you only have to look at the

cross to see the folly of that assumption. If God can bring the greatest good out of the greatest evil, then that objection is debunked.

- The moment that you confess some sort of redemptive aspect to pain & suffering, the intellectual hurdle is overcome, though often it takes a while for our hearts to catch up to our heads.
- And that's the real key. It's 1 thing to have an intellectual understanding of the sovereignty of God, it's quite another for that to move beyond the mind, to actually rest in the heart. To feel comfort by that truth when your child suffers, when you get the diagnosis, when life unravels.
- Back to Hebrews 12. The author says, don't regard lightly the discipline of the Lord. Rather, relish it. Learn to love it.
- As the wise man in Proverbs has learned to love correction and rebuke, so we should learn to love the love of God, even when it hurts, especially when it hurts.
- That discipline could be corrective. It could be in response to some sin in your life, but it could also be formative as when the Lord left the thorn in Paul's side to keep him from vanity.
- So we don't want to make the mistake of Job's friends who assumed that his suffering was due to his own sin, but neither do we want to make the mistake of those in Corinth who were getting sick and didn't see it was in response to their sin.
- Is your sickness or suffering because of sin? Perhaps, perhaps not. Trying to parse through that would take a lot of conversation, but I would start here: is there some hidden, unconfessed, unrepentant sin in your life?
- Regardless, the purpose of the discipline is not purely punitive, it's pedagogical. Its training, teaching, molding and shaping. Its renewing and reforming us. It is helping us to become in practice, what we already are in Christ.
- In other words, this passage compels us to form a better perspective on our suffering. God is treating us as sons and daughters.
 - "We can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world..." (C.S. Lewis)
- That's why Ecclesiastes says that it's better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting. I read that every single funeral I do as a reminder that God meets with us in a unique way in our lowest moments and wisdom learns to appreciate those lows and learn from them.
- Let's keep going. Vss. 7-8.

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. (Hebrews 12:7-8)

- Imagine a long distance runner who quit running every time he started to feel tired. Or a boxer who quit boxing anytime he felt pain. Or a soldier who quit bootcamp when it got tough. Or a spouse who abandoned the marriage because it was just too hard.
- Endurance is a good thing. It's something we should teach our kids. How to endure discomfort and ridicule and even pain. When we remove the discomfort too soon, we actually fail to train them, or actually we do train them, but we train them to quit, to give up, to shrink back.
- We train them to be weak and to be led by something other than a sense of what is right and good. We train them to follow their bodies rather than making their bodies follow them.
- I get this from 1 Corinthians 9:27 where Paul writes:

- *But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:27)*
- In other words, I want to spend much more time telling my body what to do rather than listening to it. I don't want to wake up when I feel like it or eat what I feel like or work out when I feel like it. I want to tell my body what time to wake up and what to eat and when to lift and so forth.
- And the same is true with my kids. My job is to help them to learn how to endure hardship by not being enslaved to their feelings.
- The author writes, it is for discipline that you have to endure. For training.
- And in that moment of pain, God is treating you as sons.
- In fact, to not face discipline is to be illegitimate.
- That makes sense in our context, but even more so in the first century Greek culture where an illegitimate child would often not receive an inheritance or education.
- And so consider what it means if God doesn't discipline you.
- According to Romans 1, how is God's wrath poured out? By giving you over to your desires. One of the most unloving things God can do for man is to give him what he wants because what we want is tainted and twisted by sin.
- So He doesn't give us what we want. Rather He gives us what we need, even when what we need isn't what we want.
- God has one overarching end in sight for His children. That they may be conformed to the image of His Son and He is working all things together for the good of that one goal.
- We see that in Romans 8:28-30 which says:
 - *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:28-30)*
- All things work together for good. Not just the things we like or enjoy or want, but all things. The tears and sorrows and pains included.
- Each of those is being used to mold and shape us to be like Christ.
- For even Christ Himself was trained through suffering. Look back at Hebrews 5:8
 - *Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8)*
- If even Christ Himself, according to His humanity, needed to learn obedience through suffering, then how much more do we?
- So we see this theme running through the NT of the redemptive purpose of our sufferings. For instance:
 - *Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope... (Romans 5:3-4)*
 - *So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)*
 - *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)*

- *In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:6–7)*
- And we see this in the OT as well
 - *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word. (Psalm 119:67)*
 - *It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. (Psalm 119:71)*
 - *And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. (Deuteronomy 8:2–5)*
- This is a consistent refrain throughout Scripture because God often shouts loudest what we find the most difficult to trust. Suffering doesn't feel redemptive, it doesn't feel kind, it doesn't feel like love.
- I remember a lot of spankings as a child, I don't ever remember being happy about it. I don't remember saying, please sir, may I have some more.
- And because it doesn't feel good, but is good, we need to have our feelings recalibrated by Scripture.
- I had a car in college with a broken gas gauge. I never knew how much gas was in the tank so I just had to try to keep track of when I last filled up.
- And that's like a lot of our hearts. We can't trust what we feel because our feelings have been trained by secularism, and feminism, and postmodernism and so forth.
- So in the very moment where God's love is being manifest in our lives, we feel abandoned, forsaken.
- Unless our feelings have been recalibrated, unless our hearts have been trained, unless our minds have been renewed, we won't see God's love and kindness in our suffering.
- Vss. 9-10

Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. (Hebrews 12:9–10)

- I love my children. But I'm imperfect. I'm imperfect in my love and knowledge and action.
- Sometimes my discipline is too harsh, sometimes too lax. Sometimes I discipline them when they don't deserve it, sometimes I don't discipline them when they do.
- I have the best of intentions as a parent, but there is a gap between my intention and the outcome because my perception is subjective and I'm fallible and finite.
- But God is not like me in that respect.
- He is perfect in intention and execution, perfect in knowledge, love, goodness, and power.
- I discipline for a short time and as seems best, but there is a distance between what seems best and what actually is best because I'm not omniscient.

- Whereas God disciplines for our objective good. He knows perfectly what is good. He defines what is good because He is the very definition of what is good.
- I might have all kinds of misperceptions of what is good. Perhaps my definition of good is for my kid to be a professional athlete and so I'm training them in that direction. Or maybe it is to get into a good college. Or maybe it is to be popular and well-liked. Whatever my definition of good will thus determine the direction of my discipline.
- Whereas God's definition of good is different.
- How does He define it?
- Notice it in the last phrase: that we may share his holiness.
- That's the goal, that's the good.
- Not just that we would be a good student, good athlete, or good musician. Those aren't ultimate. Those aren't transcendent. Good isn't so much an adjective to describe some other end as it is the end itself. In other words, the goal isn't that we would be a good ____, but that we would be good period.
- Not that we would be happy, but holy. If His goal were our happiness, then He would not let us suffer. But if His goal is our holiness, then we have to suffer.
- And notice that it is HIS holiness. Not just holiness in general, but His holiness.
- In other words, the goal is that we might be conformed to His character.
- As the Scriptures often say, be holy as I am holy.
- As a son follows his father around imitating him, wearing what he wears, saying what he says, doing what he does, so should we be molded to the image of our Father.
- Be holy as I am holy.
- Why do we need to be holy?
- We'll read this next time:
 - *Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.* (Hebrews 12:14)
- We need to be holy in order to see the Lord. Remember the problem with the old covenant. The entire edifice of the tabernacle and the temple symbolized the inaccessibility of the Lord. His presence was separated from the people by curtains and courtyards and cherubim to demonstrate the distance between God and man.
- But the glory of the new covenant is that Christ has done what the law could not. He has torn down the curtain. He has gone into the heavens. He has made a way and declared tetelestai, it is finished. Everything that is necessary to draw near is available in Christ.
- And yet there is an already, but not yet aspect to our sanctification as we've seen in the book.
- There is a sense in which we are now already holy. We have been sanctified.
 - *And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* (Hebrews 10:10)
- That is done, that is completed. We have been sanctified.
- And yet a few verses later we read:
 - *For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.* (Hebrews 10:14)
- So we are being sanctified. That's progressive. That's a process. That's ongoing.
- And that's not a contradiction, but rather an example of the mystery of the already, but not yet nature of the gospel.

- So yes, there is a sense in which we are holy now, but another sense in which we are to strive for holiness and are being sanctified and part of that sanctification process involves God's use of suffering to make us like Him.
- Vs. 11.

For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11)

- Imagine a parent going to spank their kid and the kid asking if they can put on some extra layers of clothes or if you can use a softer spank stick or spank them on a different part of the body.
- Not that my kids have ever done that, but hypothetically why might they ask? To lessen the sting. Because it hurts.
- But the pain is the point. The author says all discipline seems painful.
- That's true whether for corrective or formative discipline. Spankings hurt, getting your mouth washed out with soap hurts, getting grounded for a month hurts. But so does formative discipline. That last rep on the squat rack hurts, the final lap around the track hurts, getting up early to spend time with the Lord hurts.
- All discipline seems painful rather than pleasant.
- If it doesn't hurt, you're leaving too much in the tank.
- But the pain bears fruit. It yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
- As Aristotle said, "the roots of discipline are bitter, but its fruit is sweet."
- And the fruit is the goal. The pain isn't the end, but it is the necessary means to accomplish the end. Discipline isn't about making someone hurt, it is about making someone better.
- A better child, a better athlete, a better student, and better citizen, whatever.
- God's goal for His children is that they might be fit for heaven. And He uses whatever is best aimed to accomplish that end.
- So rather than resisting discipline, we should embrace it. Learn to appreciate it. Redeem it.
- We should discipline ourselves and receive discipline from others, including the Lord. We should pursue it and receive it as a gift because we are humble enough to know that we need it. Because we remember that we are in a war and that our flesh is weak.
- Even now sin is strategizing to overthrow us so we discipline ourselves that we might not give up and give in.
- The threat facing the Hebrews was the same that faces us today. That we would grow disheartened, discouraged, disoriented and thus disobedient.
- So I want to leave you with this exhortation:
 - *My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives. (Hebrews 12:5b-6)*
- Let's pray.

Communion

- Fence table
- As we partake, I just want to make some space for a bit of introspection.
- In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul writes of the need to judge ourselves as we take this meal so I want to encourage you to do that. To think about any areas that need to be changed, anything for which you need to repent, anything you need to confess.

- Take a few minutes and ask the Lord to examine you and reveal any outstanding sin to you and then we'll partake together.
- On the night...